THAT IS... ME.... MIZUNASHI AKARI...
LIGHT CANNOT REACH ME.... THE LIGHT ITSELF CANNOT EVEN SHINE.... THE ORIGIN OF DARKNESS....
MY NAME IS... MIZUNASHI AKARI...
WATERLESS... NOT EVEN A SINGLE DROP OF WATER... A TRULY PARCHED SOUL...
(NOTE: 水無 = MIZUNASHI = WATER-LESS, 灯里 = AKARI = TOWN/HOME/ORIGIN OF LIGHT)

THIS IS... ME... MIZU-NASHI AKARI.
SELFISH, INTROVERTED, JEALOUS, PESSIMISTIC, BEGRUDGING, COWARD, MEAN, UNHEALTHY, LONER, DESPAIR, AND UNHAPPY. CORRUPTED, LETHARGIC,

TO BE BORN IS TO BEGIN AN ORDEAL...
TO BE BORN ITSELF IS A PENANCE...
THIS WORLD IS HELL...
YEAR 23XX
MAN-HOME

I WONDER WHY.... THESE "THINGS" EXIST IN THIS WORLD.... WHY IS THE WORLD SO UGLY...? WHY WAS I BORN IN THIS KIND OF PLACE...?

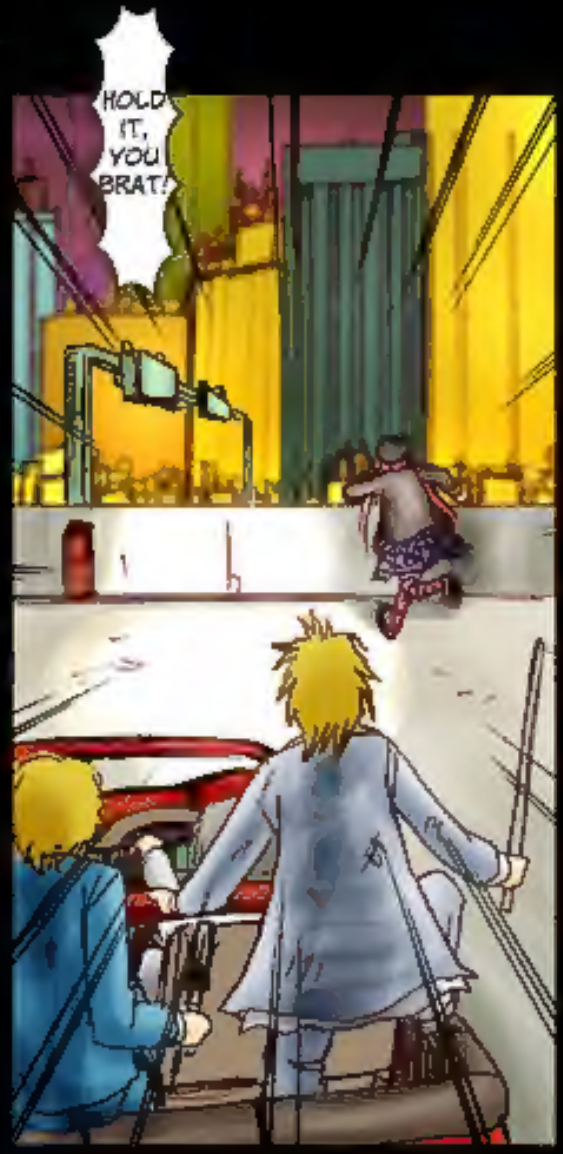
BUT THAT PLANET IS NOW A PARA-DISE THAT GIVES OFF A BLUE LIGHT IN THE NIGHT SKY...

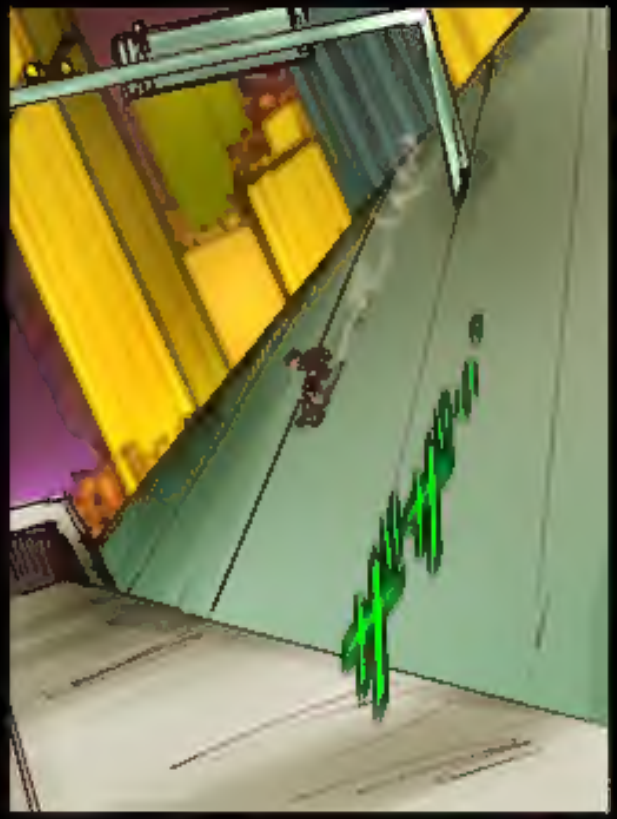
PLANET AQUA...

JUST LIKE THE ME RIGHT NOW...

MARS, TOO, WAS A DESO-LATE PLANET THAT SHONE WITH A RED LIGHT...

YES, I KNEW TOO WELL THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE... HOWEVER, THAT DREAM... IS THE ONLY REASON THAT I'M STILL ALIVE RIGHT NOW...
THAT IS... TO BECOME AN UNDINE... ON AQUA... IN THAT BEAUTIFUL CITY CALLED NEO-VENEZIA...
EVEN WHILE LIVING IN THIS MANHOME... IN THIS LIVING HELL OF DESPAIR... I HAD A DREAM...
SO BEAUTIFUL IS THAT PLACE.... THEY DON'T WANT ANYBODY ELSE TO KNOW... ABOUT THAT EDEN...
IN ORDER TO GET INTO AQUA, ONE MUST HAVE STATUS AND GOOD MORALS. OTHERWISE, YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO GO THERE EVEN IF IT'S JUST FOR SIGHTSEEING. AND THE ONLY WAY TO KNOW ABOUT AQUA'S LATEST SITUATION IS THROUGH THE STORIES OF THOSE WHO TRAVELED THERE FOR SIGHTSEEING AND RETURNED. THEY NEVER BRING HOME ANY VIDEOS OR PICTURES. HOWEVER, THE TRAVELERS WHO HAVE CAUGHT A GLIMPSE OF AQUA ONCE WON'T SPEND MUCH TIME TALKING WITH THE VULGAR RESIDENTS OF MANHOME ANYWAY.
THAT MUST BE SOLELY FOR THE SAKE OF MOVING AWAY FROM MANHOME. AFTER ALL, THERE IS AN INCREASING NUMBER OF HOPEFUL IMMIGRANTS WHO YEARN FOR THE PARADISE THAT IS AQUA.
CURRENTLY, MANHOME HAS NO INFORMATION ABOUT AQUA. THEY CAN'T GET THE INFORMATION. THAT IS BECAUSE AQUA IS IN A SEMI-ISOLATED SITUATION. TV, MAGAZINES, OR INTERNET; ALL KINDS OF MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS ARE BEING BLOCKED. IF ANYBODY WANTS TO SEE AQUA, THEY CAN ONLY SEE HER IN BOOKS OR PICTURES THAT DATE BACK 100 YEARS AGO.

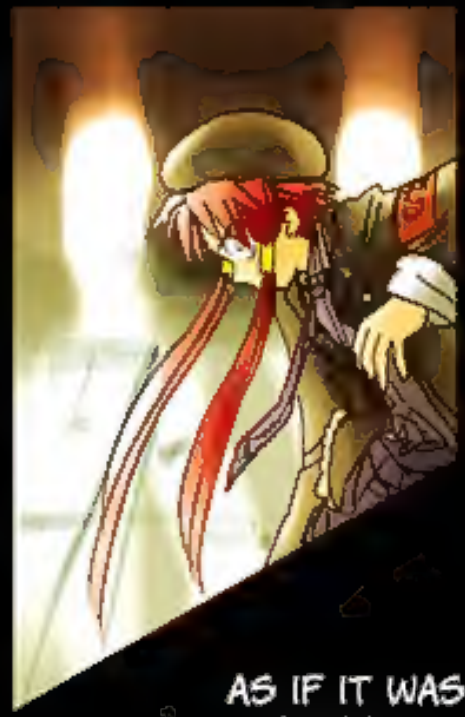

HOLD IT, YOU BRAT!



THERE SHE IS! IT'S THAT BRAT!
!

THAT LIGHT...

SENT ME FLYING...



TOGETHER WITH A VIOLENT IMPACT...

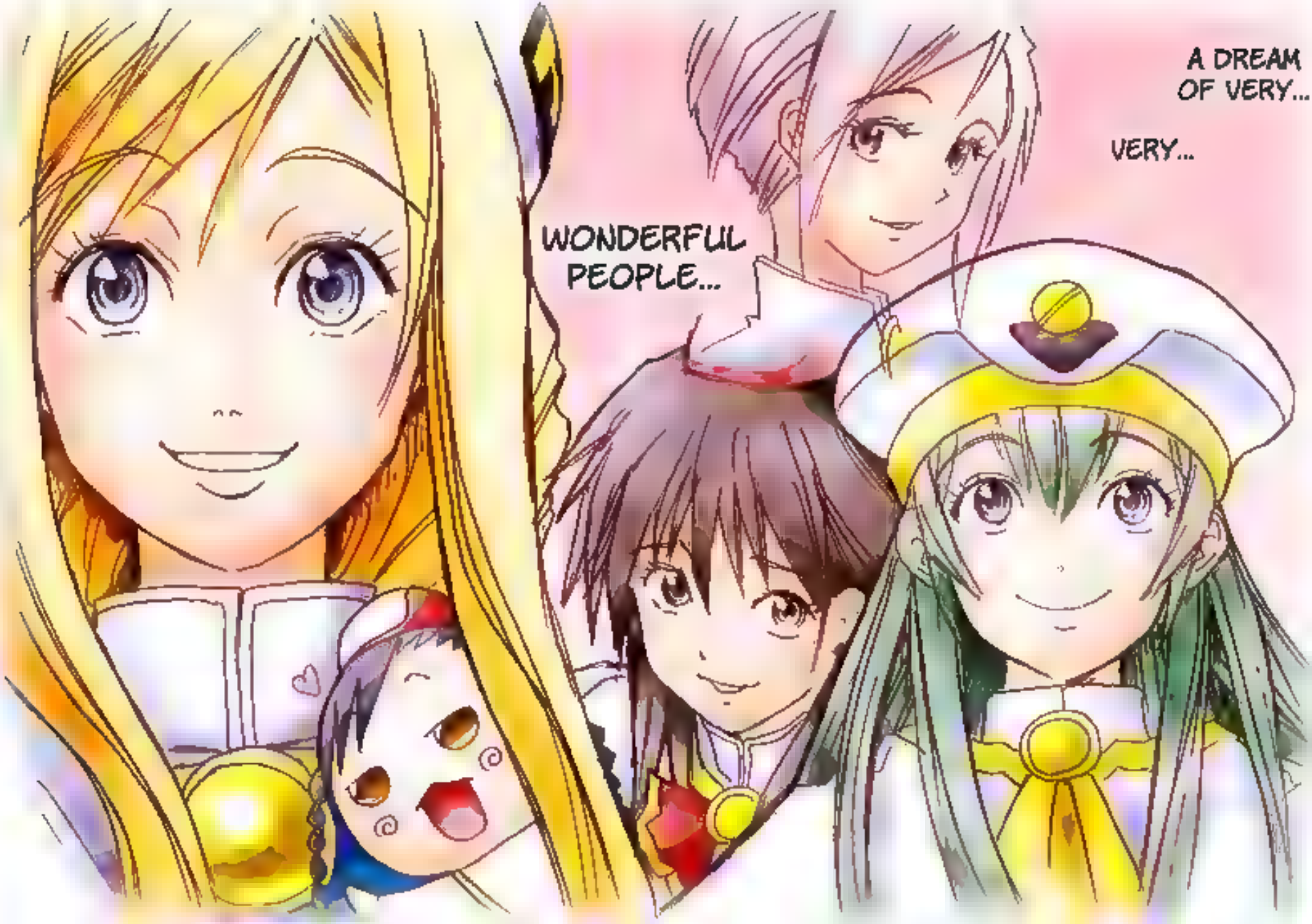
AS IF IT WAS TRYING TO SMASH THAT DREAM INTO PIECES... THOSE TWO LIGHTS...

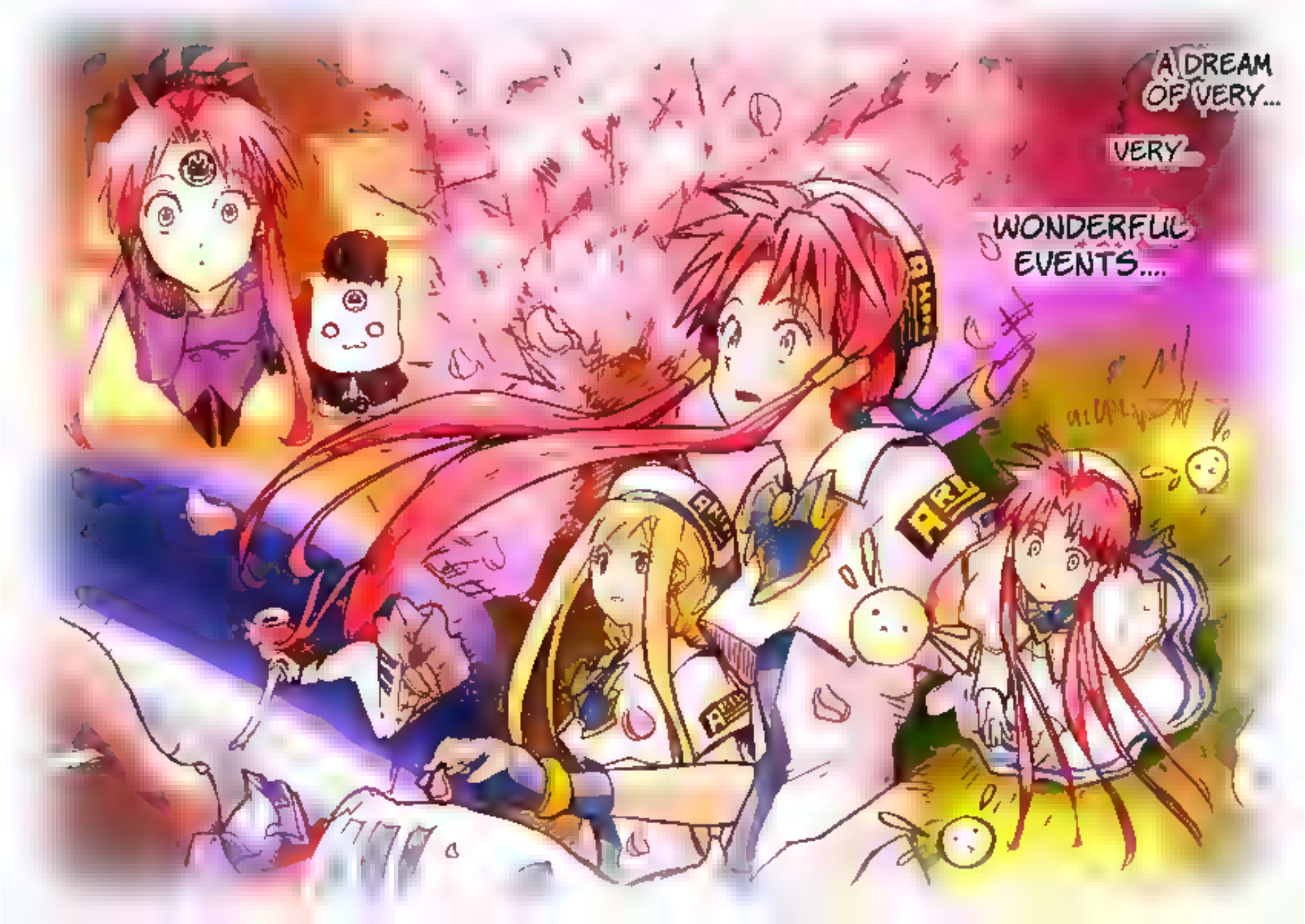
DURING THAT LONG, LONG TIME...

I... WAS DREAM-ING...

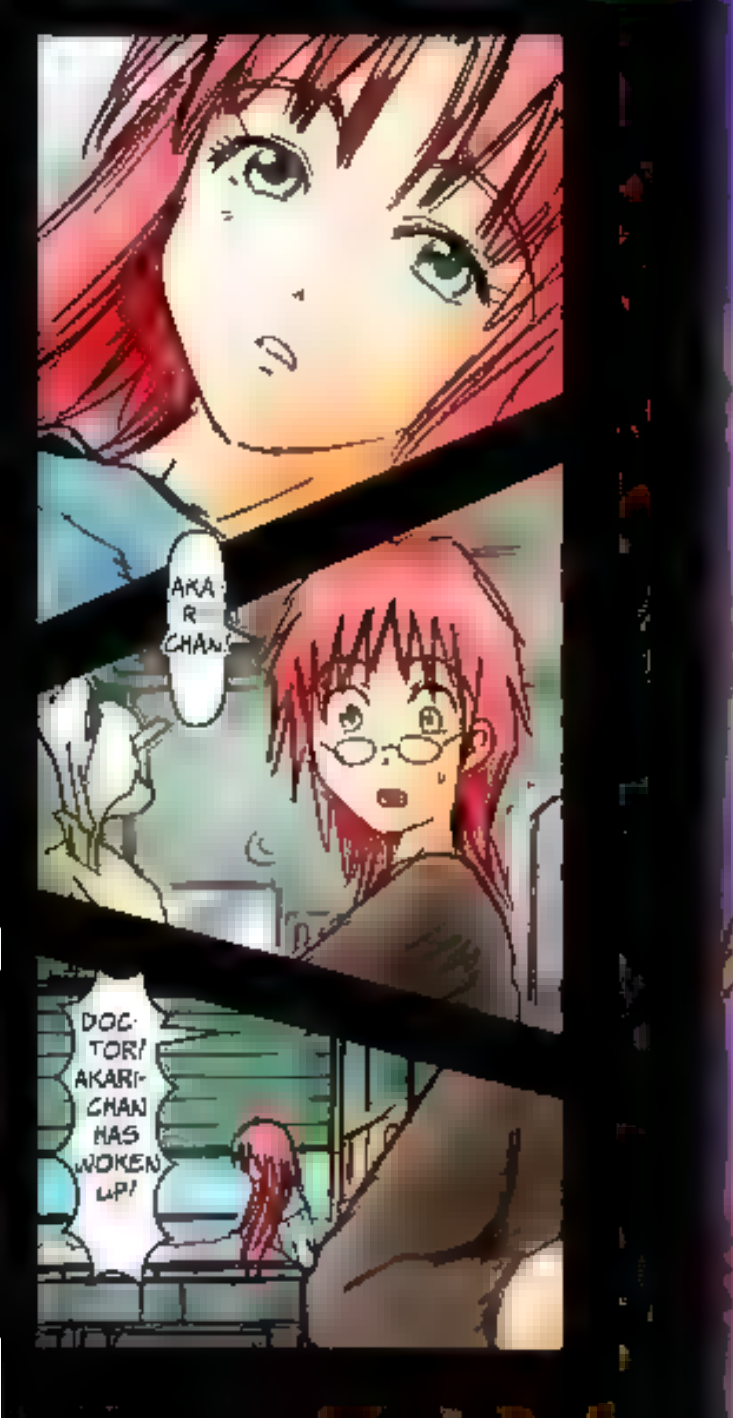
AL-THOUGH MY LIFE WAS SAVED, I WAS UNABLE TO REGAIN CON-SCIOUS-NESS....

WON-
DERFUL
SCEN-
ERIES...
A DREAM
OF VERY
VERY.


A DREAM OF VERY...
VERY...
WONDERFUL PEOPLE...


A DREAM OF VERY...
VERY
WONDERFUL EVENTS....

I BECAME AN APPRENTICE UNDINE
AND SPENT WONDERFUL DAYS...
IN THAT AQUA I HAD YET TO SEE...
IN THAT NEO-VENEZIA I HAD YET TO SEE...



AT THE TIME... I BECAME A PRIMA..

I WOKE UP FROM MY LONG, LONG SLEEP...

ARIA

ARIA

IN SUCH A SHORT TIME, I REGAINED MY VITALITY, PHYSICAL STRENGTH, AND WAS SOON ABLE TO GET DISCHARGED FROM THE HOSPITAL.

I, WHO HAVE REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, HAVE BECOME A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT FROM MY PAST SELF

THREE YEARS, SUCH A LONG TIME, HAVE PASSED ...

I'M BACK ☆

IT WAS ALL A DREAM...

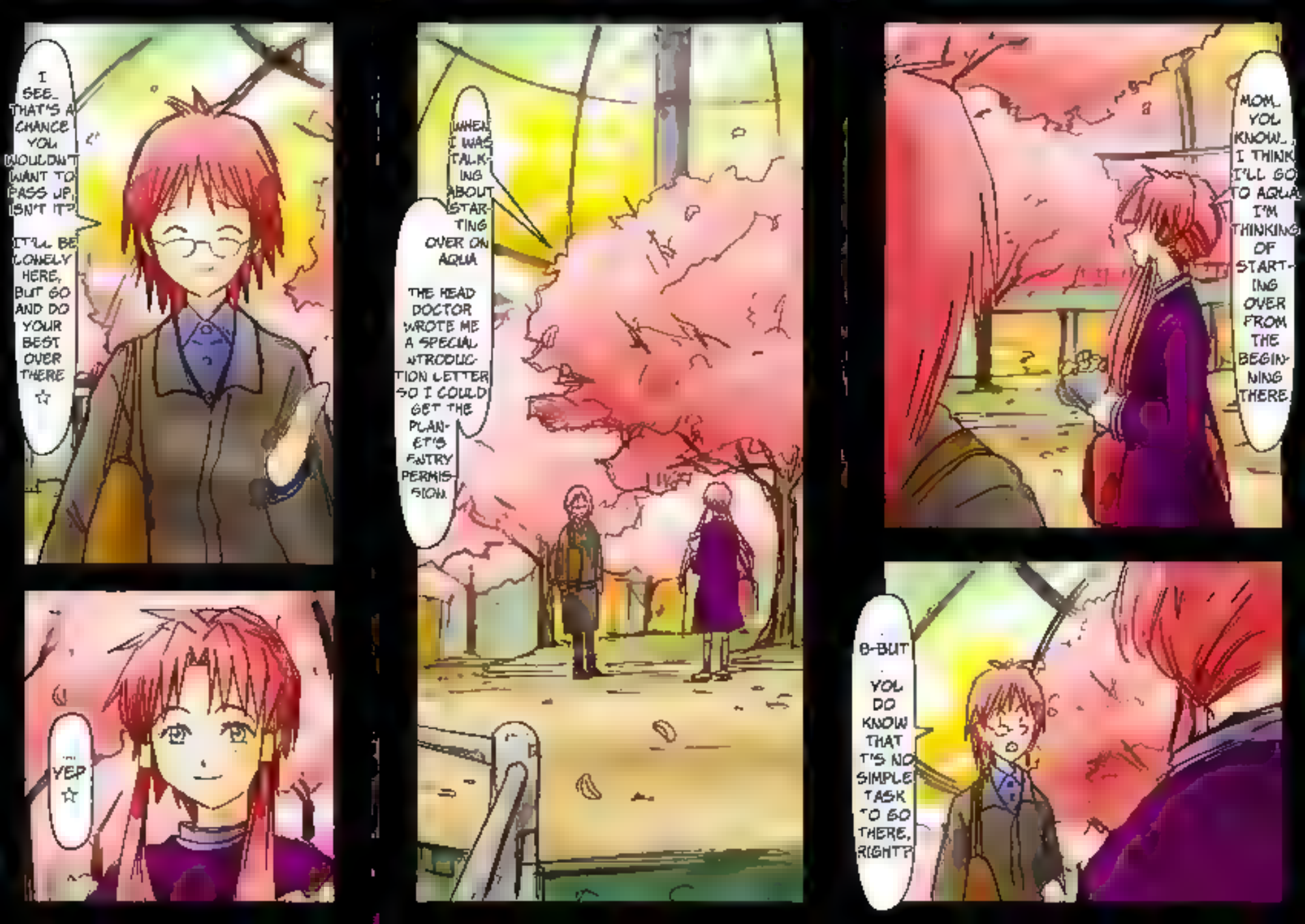
THIS IS MAN-HOME

IT'S MOM, CAN YOU TELL ?

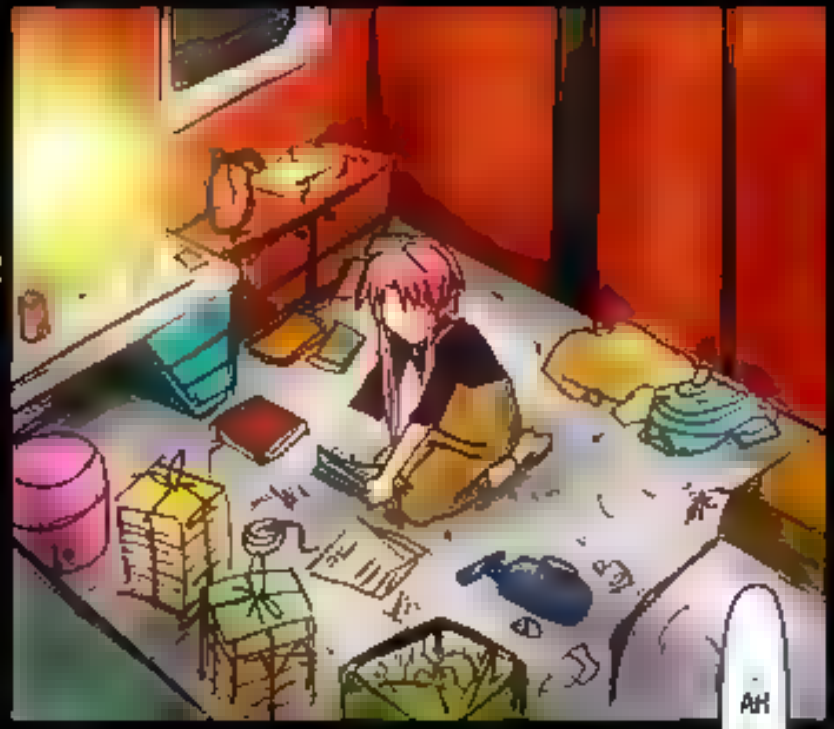
AKARI CHAN ..?

MOM ..

SAKURA
MY MOM WHOM I USED TO LOATHE SO
I NOW THOUGHT OF HER AS A VERY LOVELY MOTHER..
SOME-HOW..
I FELT THAT IT LOOKED WONDER FUL..
MAN-HOME'S SCENERY WITH SUCH GRAY COLORS
WHEN I WENT HOME FROM THE HOSPITAL, I SAW THE SCENERY OF MANHOME...


I SEE. THAT'S A CHANCE YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO PASS UP, ISN'T IT?
IT'LL BE LONELY HERE, BUT GO AND DO YOUR BEST OVER THERE ☆
...YEP ☆
WHEN I WAS TALKING ABOUT STARTING OVER ON AQUA
THE HEAD DOCTOR WROTE ME A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION LETTER SO I COULD GET THE PLANET'S FAIRY PERMISSION.
MOM. YOU KNOW... I THINK I'LL GO TO AQUA I'M THINKING OF STARTING OVER FROM THE BEGINNING THERE.
B-BUT... YOU DO KNOW THAT IT'S NO SIMPLE TASK TO GO THERE, RIGHT?

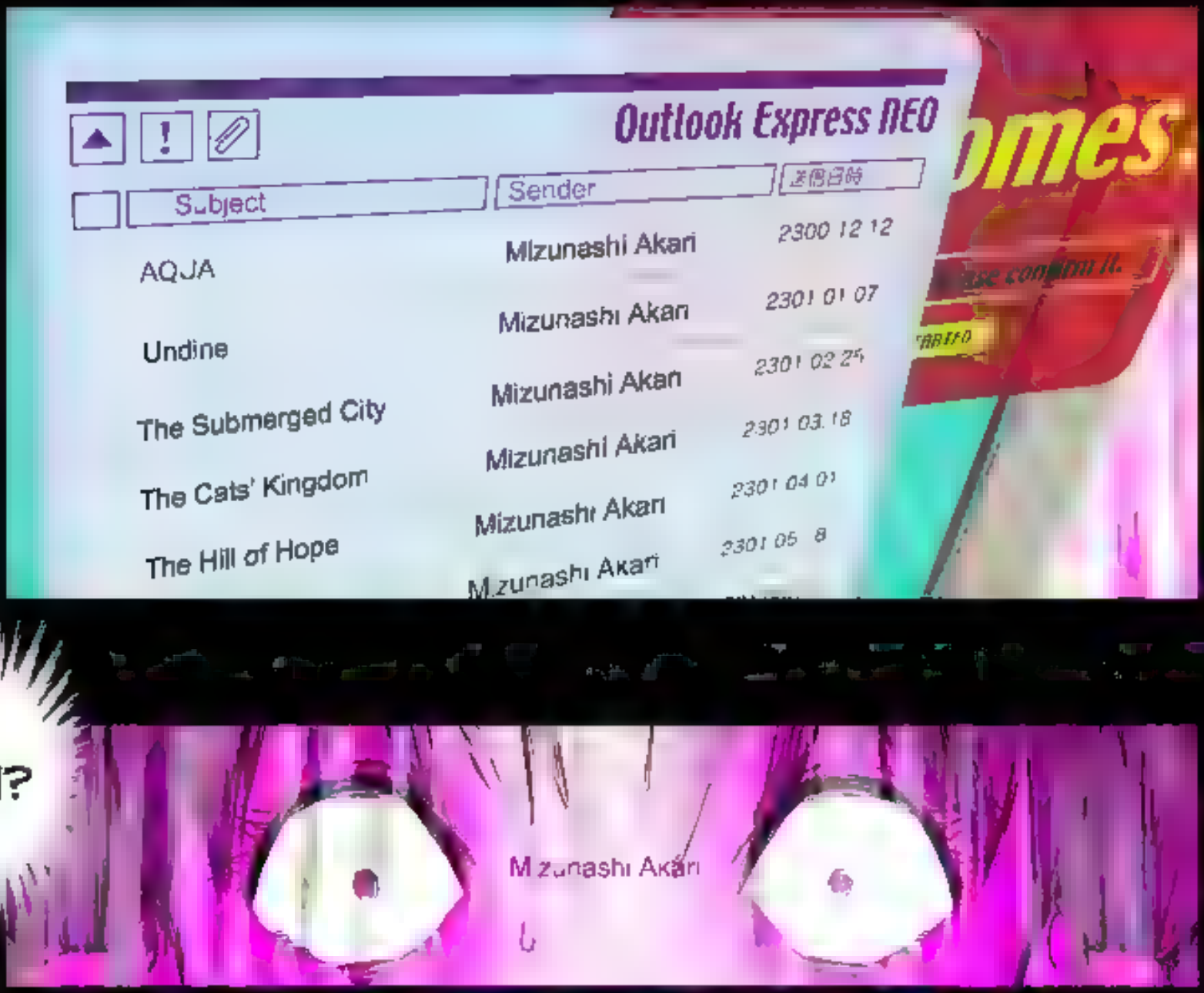
LET ALONE WHEN I WAS HOSPITALIZED, EVEN WAY BEFORE THAT, I HAVE ALMOST NEVER TOUCHED THE LAPTOP THAT IS TOTALLY COVERED IN DUST...



DURING THE FOLLOWING MONTH, I ALREADY STARTED PREPARING FOR MY DEPARTURE.

I CAN JUST LOOK FOR A JOB AFTER I HAVE ARRIVED OVER THERE. IF THINGS GO WELL, I SHOULD GET ASSIGNED A JOB AS AN UNDINE. THAT IS WHAT I'VE BEEN THINKING.

THAT'S ODD.. THESE MAILS I DON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS AND I NEVER EVEN TOLD ANYBODY MY EMAIL ADDRESS
DURING THE 3 YEARS IN WHICH I WAS UNCON-SCIOUS...
ONLY DURING THAT 3 YEAR PERIOD...
THERE WERE MANY MAILS SENT TO ME...
Mail Come
Outlook Express
ピコ
????
MAIL ..? FOR ME?


Outlook Express NEO
Subject
Sender
AQJA
Mizunashi Akari
2300 12 12
Undine
Mizunashi Akari
2301 01 07
The Submerged City
Mizunashi Akari
2301 02 25
The Cats' Kingdom
Mizunashi Akari
2301 03 18
The Hill of Hope
Mizunashi Akari
2301 04 01
Mizunashi Akari
2301 05 8
I GASPED WHEN I SAW THE NAME OF THE SENDER.
EH?
Mizunashi Akari

AQUA

MIZUNASHI AKARI IN AQUA THAT I SAW IN MY DREAM..

THESE ARE ALL...

WHAT I HAVE EXPERIENCED IN MY DREAM..

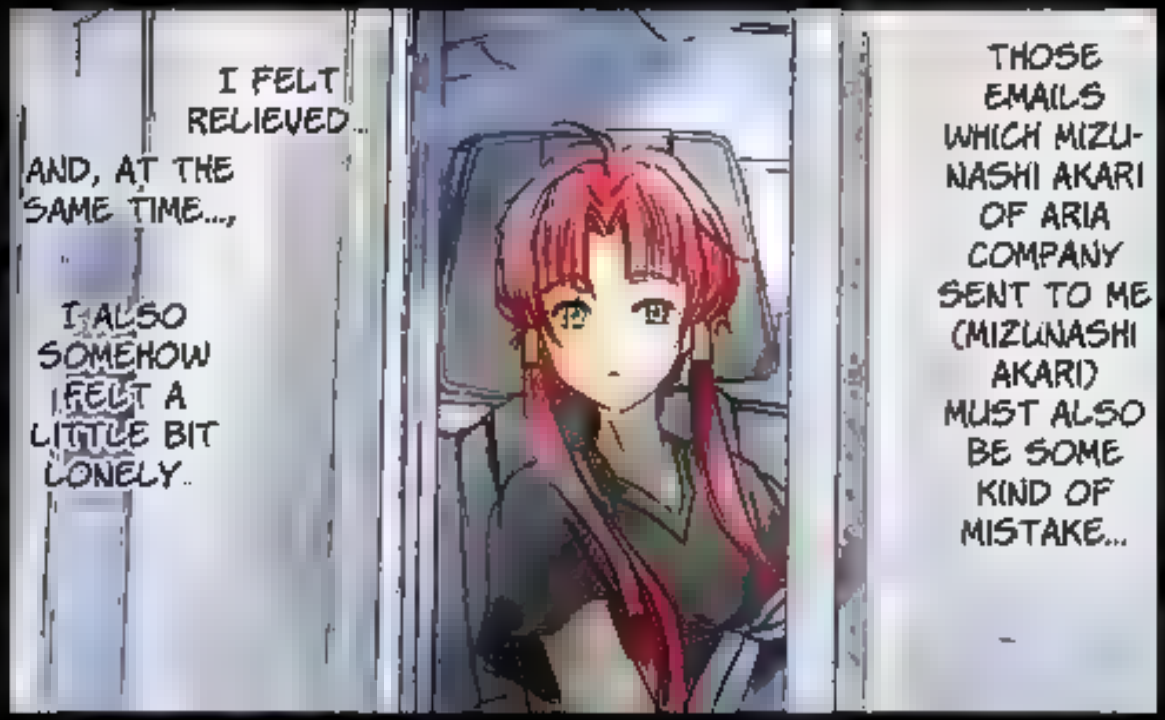
Outlook Expre

My First Customer　　水無灯里　　23

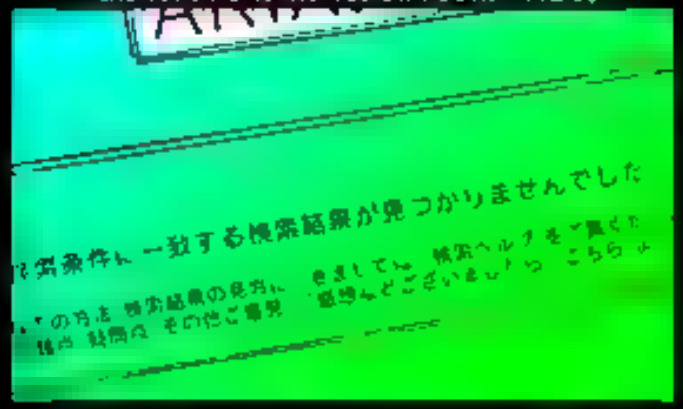
THE MAIL CONTENT... IN AQUA.. NO, THESE E-MAILS ARE SENT BY...

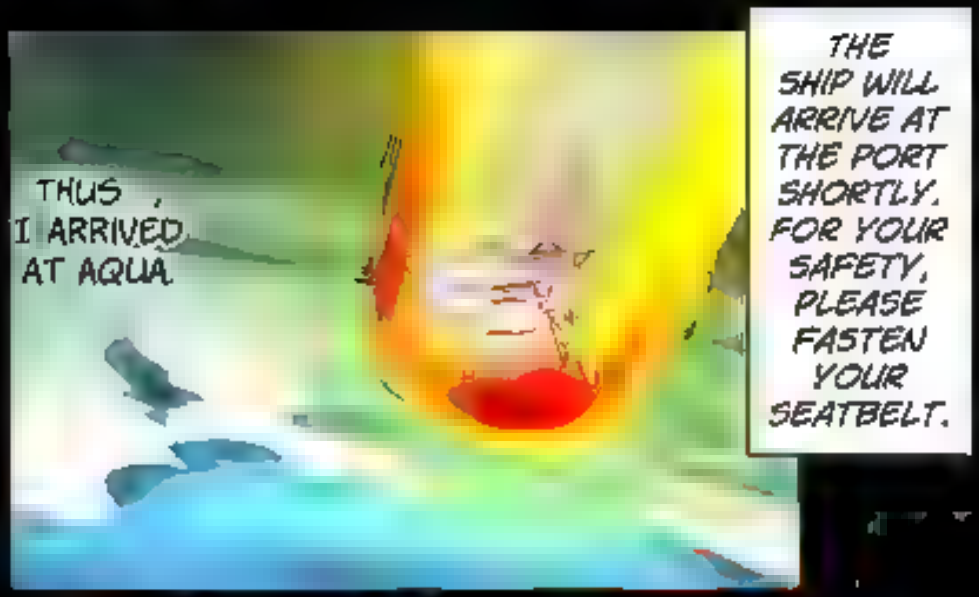
I BECAME SCARED... AND THEN DELETED ALL OF THEM RIGHT AWAY...
DEAR PASSENGERS, THE SHIP WILL ENTER THE ATMOSPHERE OF PLANET AQUA SHORTLY.

WHEN I HAVE ENTERED THE ATMOSPHERE, I SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACCESS ALL INFORMATION ABOUT AQUA THAT IS BEING FILTERED FROM THERE. I'LL SEARCH FOR JOBS. AFTER ALL, THE ACCESS IS A MUST TO KNOW ABOUT THE CITY.
EVEN THEN, I BROUGHT MY LAPTOP TO AQUA.
SEARCH
Aria Company
GULP
BEFORE RESEARCHING ABOUT AQUA, THERE'S ONE THING THAT I WANT TO KNOW YET AM TOO SCARED TO KNOW


I FELT RELIEVED...
AND, AT THE SAME TIME...
I ALSO SOMEHOW FELT A LITTLE BIT LONELY...
THOSE EMAILS WHICH MIZUNASHI AKARI OF ARIA COMPANY SENT TO ME (MIZUNASHI AKARI) MUST ALSO BE SOME KIND OF MISTAKE...

(NOTE: IT'S A "NO MATCH FOUND" PAGE)



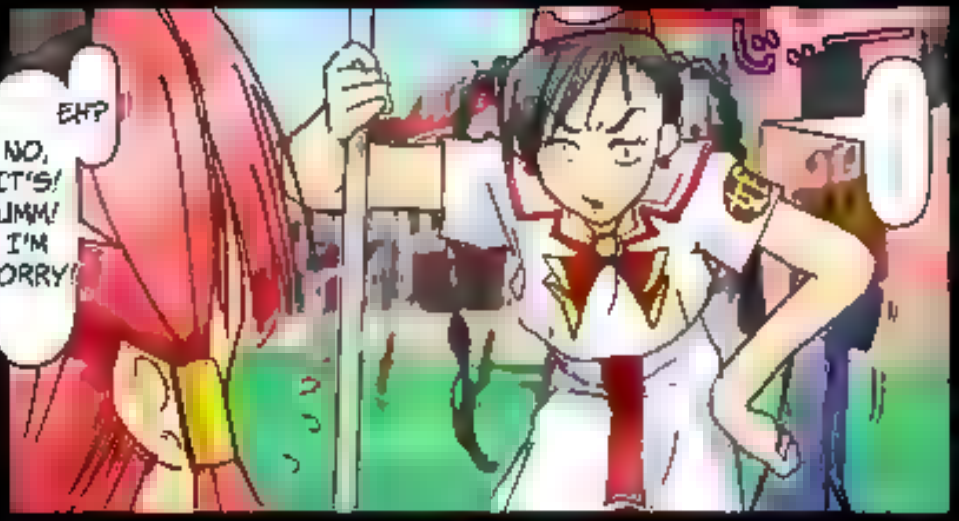


AFTER ALL, THOSE ARE JUST PRODUCTS OF MY DREAM.
AS I EXPECTED, IT TURNS OUT THAT THE COMPANY DOESN'T EXIST HIMEYA AND ORANGE PLANET AS WELL.

THE SCENERY... THAT I SAW IN MY DREAM...
THIS IS THE PLA-NET OF WATER, AQUA...
THIS IS NEO-VENE-ZIA...

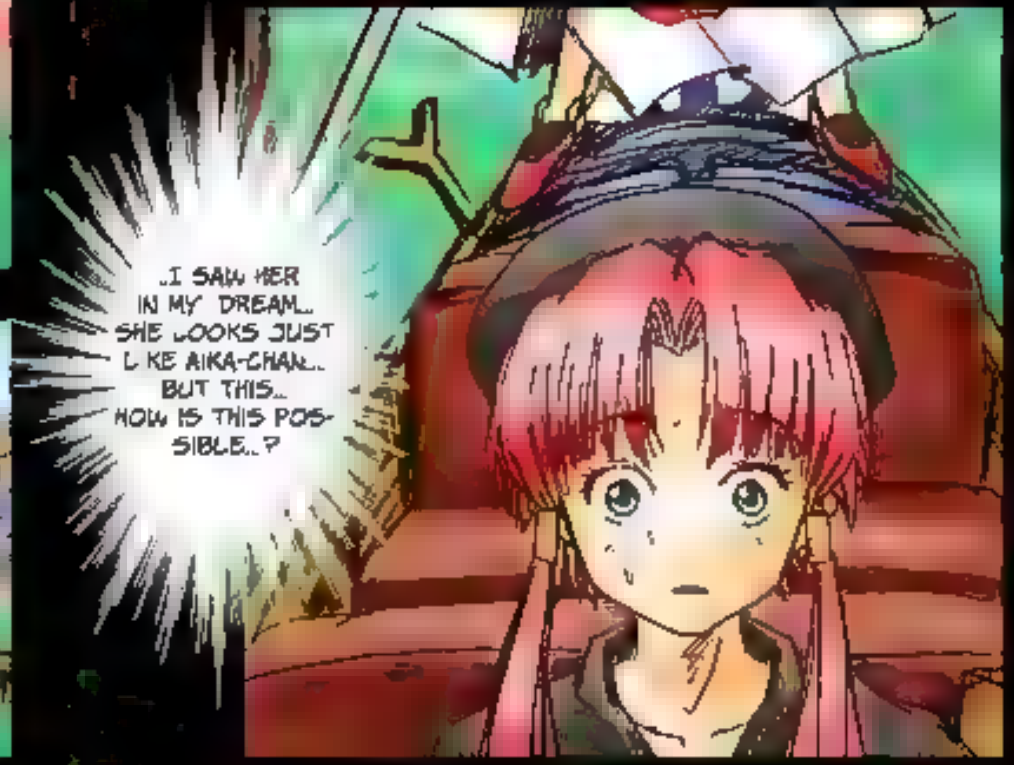
ALSO...
THIS IS.... NEO-VENEZIA.. WITHOUT A DOUBT... IT'S RIGHT HERE BEFORE MY EYES...
THAT SCENERY... THE ONE I SAW IN MY DREAM.. HOW COULD.... THAT SCENERY....

AAAAAA!
Air
Aik
?
LOOK BEHIND YOU! YOU ARE BLOCKING THEIR WAY, YOU SEE?
EH?
AH! I'M SOR-RY!
...
EH?
HEY ARE YOU GOING TO ENTER OR NOT?


EH?
NO, IT'S! UMM! I'M SORRY!

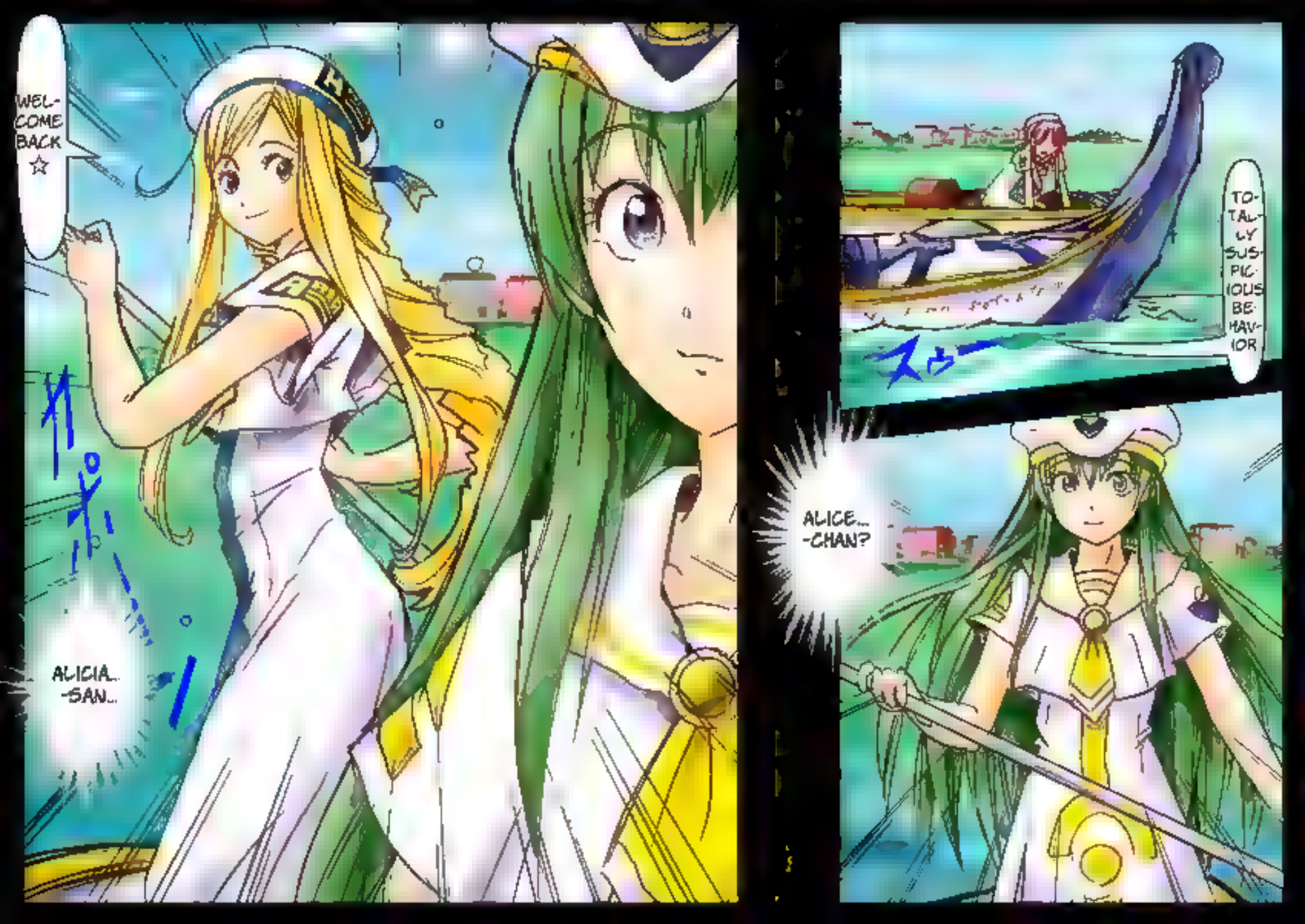
UM, AH, MY DESTINATION IS.

WAIT, WOAH!
I'M SORRY I'M GETTING ON!
ドカ"


..I SAW HER IN MY DREAM.. SHE LOOKS JUST LIKE AIKA-CHAN.. BUT THIS.. HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE..?

...ARIA COM-PA-NY,
RIG-HT?

BEING COLD AND DIS-TANT IS PRO-HIB-ITED!


WEL-
COME
BACK
☆
ALICIA
-SAN...
TO-
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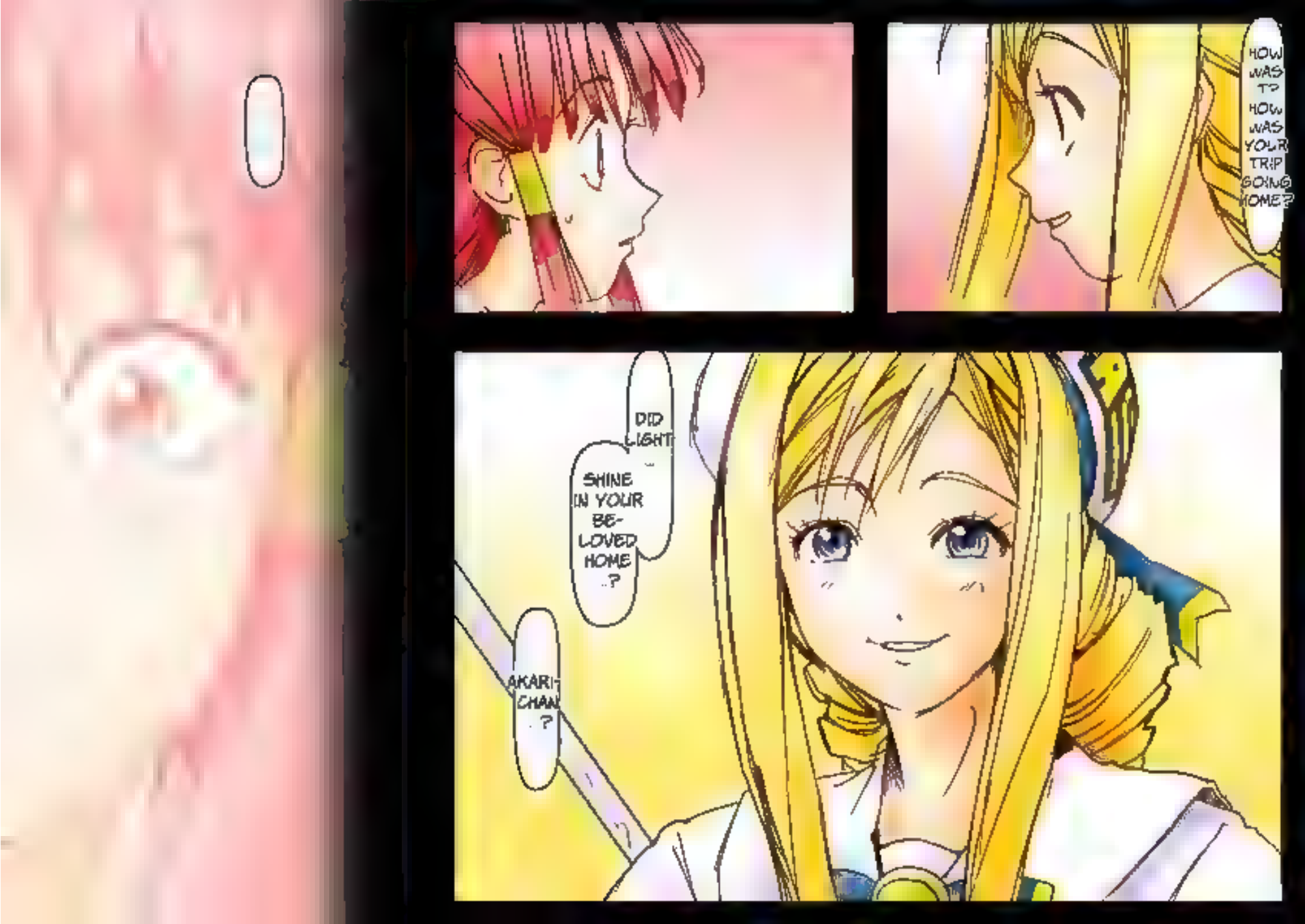
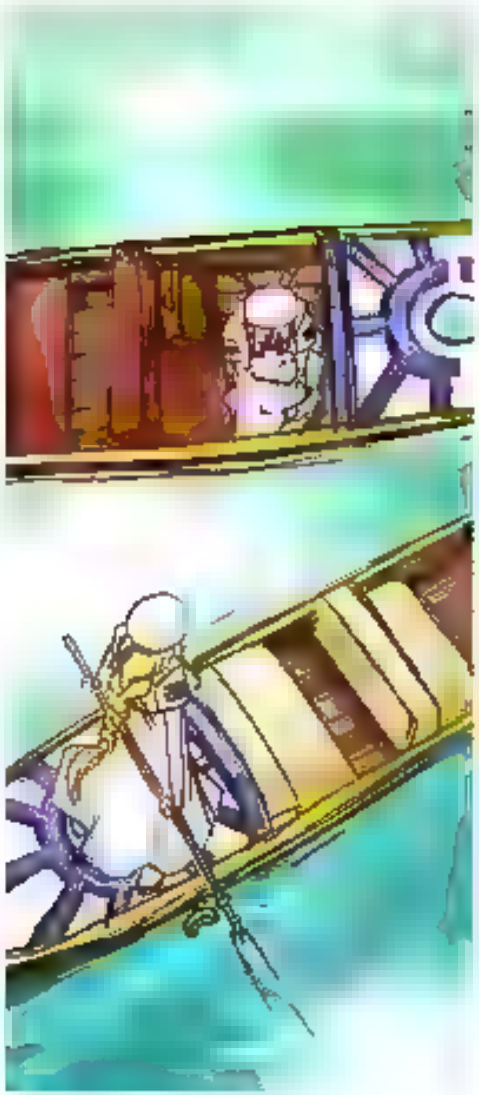
PIC-
IOUS
BE-
HAV-
IOR
スゥー
ALICE...
-CHAN?


HOW WAS T?
HOW WAS YOUR TRIP GOING HOME?
DID LIGHT
SHINE IN YOUR BE-LOVED HOME ..?
AKARI-CHAN ..?

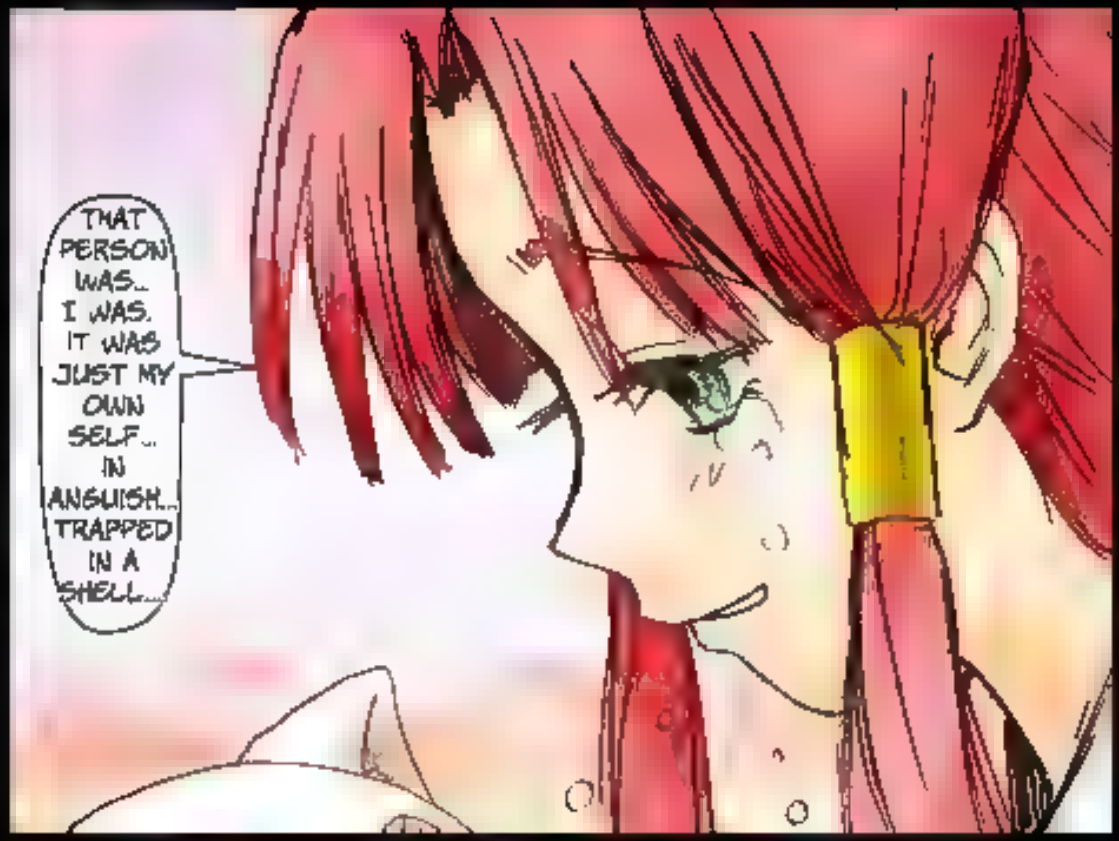
THE MIZU-NASHI AKARI OF ARIA....
MIZUNASHI AKARI....
I SEE.
SO, THA-T'S HOW IT WAS...

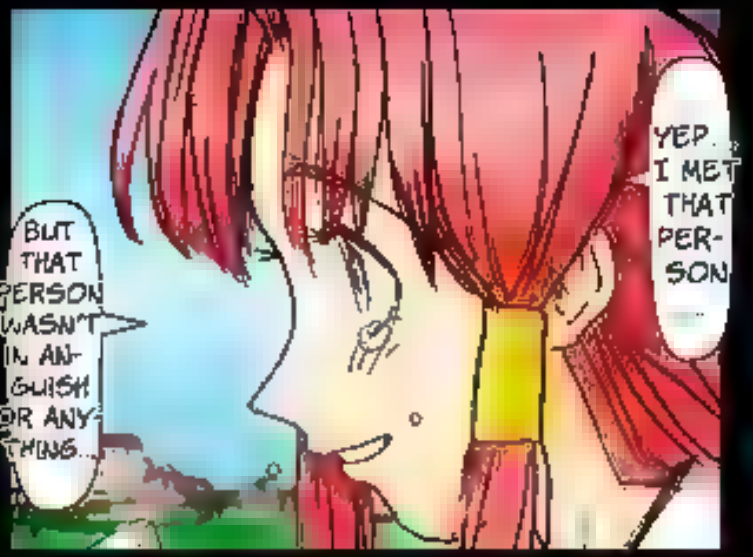


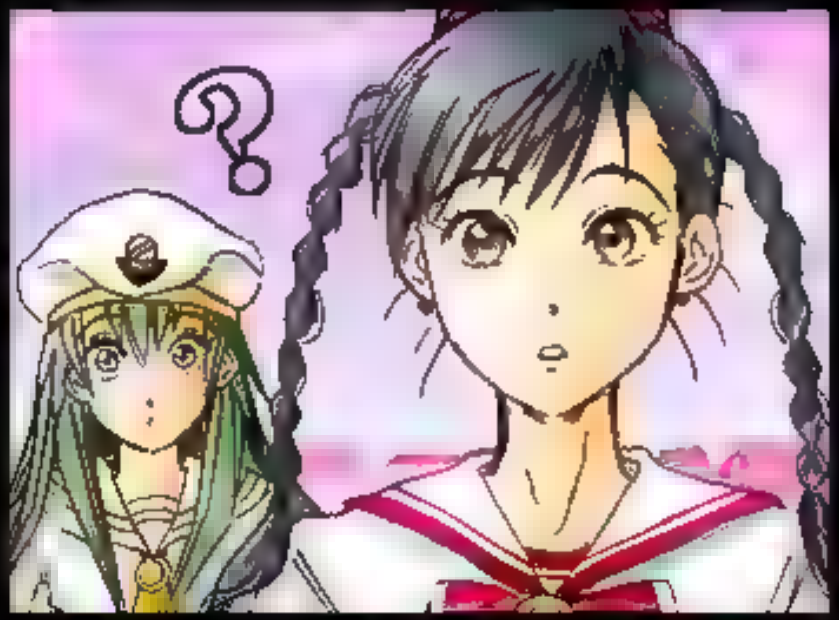
...IS
...
ME...

AH?

SO, HOW WAS IT? ABOUT YOUR PENPAL... YOU SAID SHE IS STRUGGLING IN MANHOME. YOU WENT HOME TO MEET THAT PERSON, RIGHT?


THAT PERSON WAS... I WAS. IT WAS JUST MY OWN SELF... IN ANGUISH... TRAPPED IN A SHELL...


BUT THAT PERSON WASN'T IN ANGUISH OR ANYTHING...
YEP. I MET THAT PERSON...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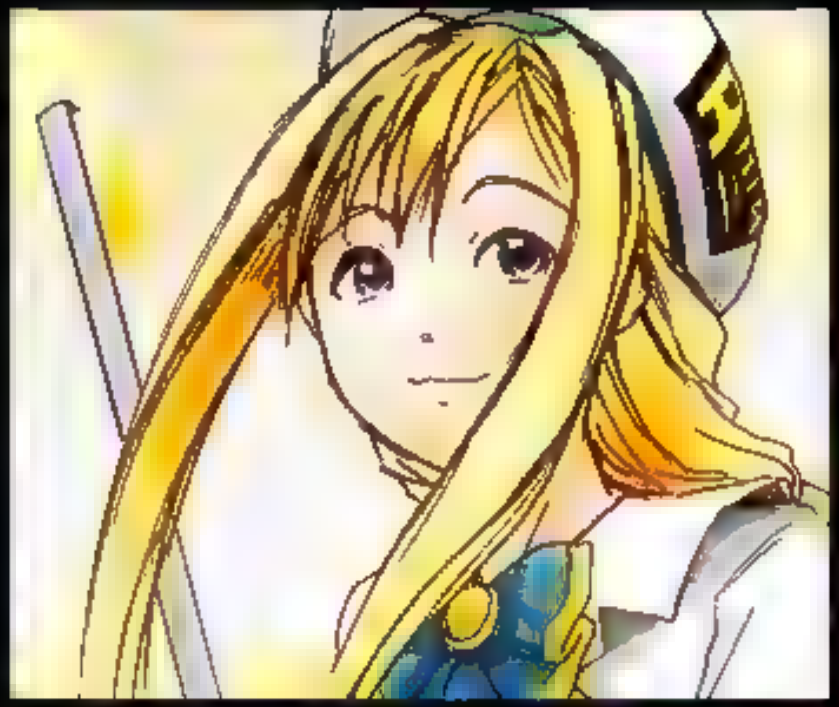

MAN-
HOME
WAS
WON-
DER-
FUL
IT
WAS A
BEAU-
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PLACE
AND
..
I'M
GLAD
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THAT
I
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I'M GLAD..
THAT I
COULD
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EV-
ERY-
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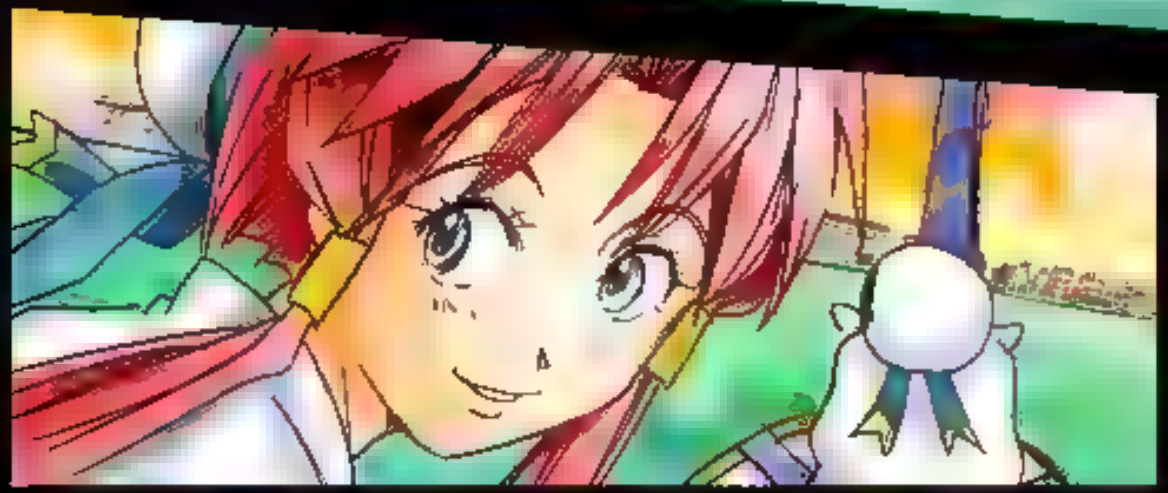
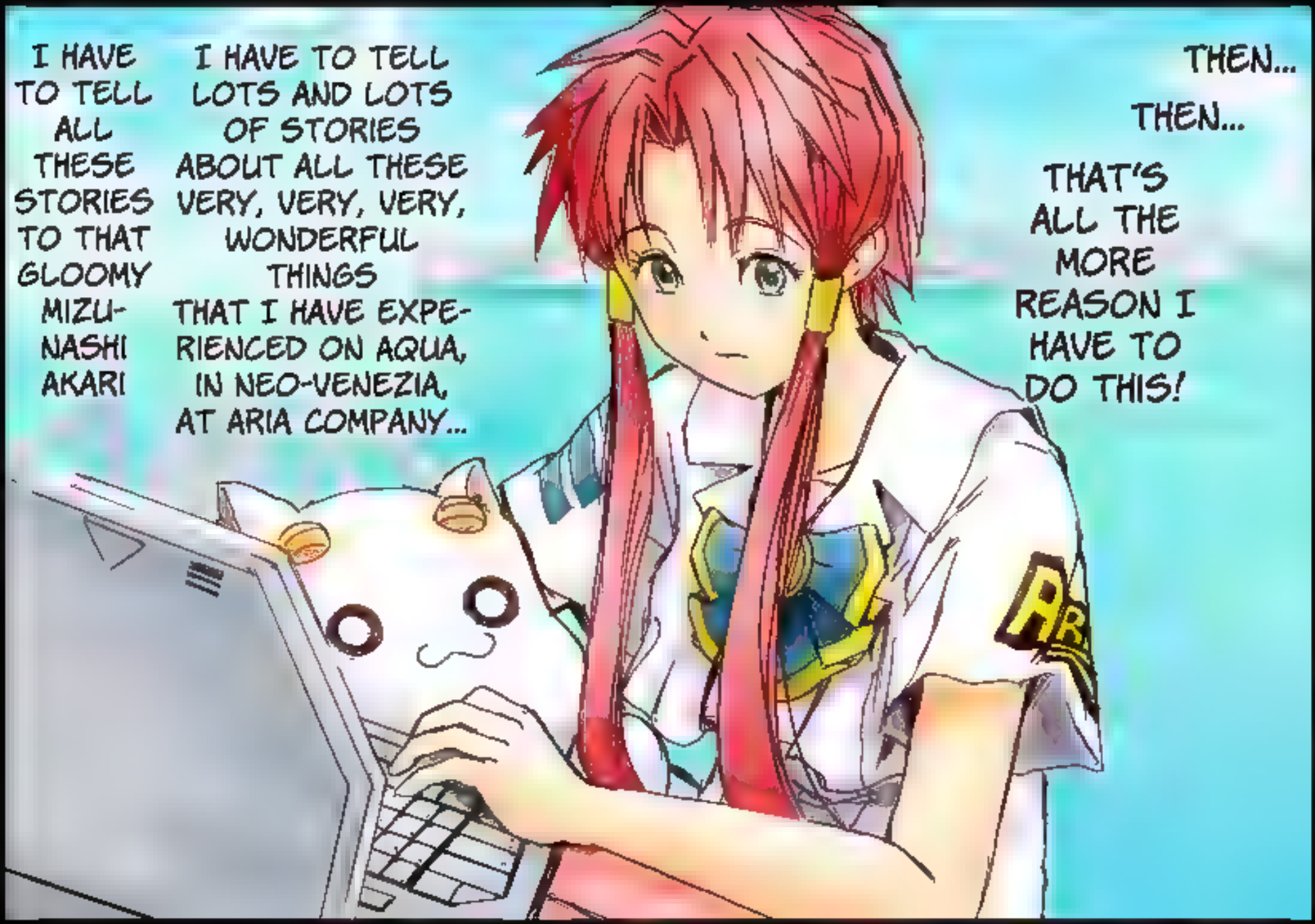
IN...



NO, THAT'S NOT QUITE RIGHT... IT COULD BE THAT... THE ME RIGHT WHO IS LIVING HERE... IN THIS WORLD OF ARIA... EVERYTHING, EVERYTHING RIGHT HERE MAY BE THE DREAM OF MIZUNASHI AKARI IN DESPAIR...
MIZUNASHI AKARI WAS... ME...
THE MIZUNASHI AKARI WHO HAD A WONDER-FUL EXPE-RIENCE ON AQUA... WAS ME...
THE DYING MIZUNASHI AKARI IN MANHOME... WAS A NIGHTMARE THAT I SAW...


I HAVE TO TELL ALL THESE STORIES TO THAT GLOOMY MIZU-NASHI AKARI
I HAVE TO TELL LOTS AND LOTS OF STORIES ABOUT ALL THESE VERY, VERY, VERY, WONDERFUL THINGS THAT I HAVE EXPE-RIENCED ON AQUA, IN NEO-VENEZIA, AT ARIA COMPANY...
THEN...
THEN...
THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON I HAVE TO DO THIS!

I HAVE TO TELL HER, THAT IF YOU LIVE WITH A WONDERFUL FEELING...
THEN EVERY-THING WILL ALSO BECOME WONDERFUL...
I HAVE TO TELL HER... THIS EMAIL...
MUST REACH HER NO MATTER WHAT...

FROM
ME....

TO
MYSELF....

DEAR-

AKARI-
SAMA...

http://paricross.sakura.ne.jp/aria/ariatop.html?0330/paricross

-Afterword-

Whether Akari's mail friend doesn't really exist or the other way around...
Whether Akari left Manhome with a sorrowful reason behind it or not...
Whether Akari is just writing herself wonderful stories or not...
Whether Akari herself doesn't actually exist or the other way around...
Whether the inversed world of Aria itself is just a dream that Mizunashi Akari is dreaming or not...

The one whom Mizunashi Akari send her e-mail to is... Mizunashi Akari.
Akari is sending herself e-mails. Delivering herself the stories about the wonderful experiences.
Sending more love to her despaired and helpless self, more so than to her own self
who wishes to be more and more wonderful.

Dear... Akari-sama.

It's that kind of feeling, I let mysaif to draw this with a totally different point of view from the original work.
There's a boundary between the fantasy world and reality called Aria, with the reader (myself) who goes back and forth between them, and this manga serves as a space within that.
I somehow drew this especially for those who like the 'manga x short story', and I think I managed to convey it.
Just for whom, and for what, are your stories unfolding?

(2008 4) shingo